

REMARKS

The Office Action dated June 18, 2008 has been received and considered. Applicants thank the Examiner for his useful suggestions regarding the claims during a telephone call on October 8, 2008.

In this reply, claims 24, 32, 43, and 51-58 are canceled (claims 1-13, 15-22, 25-29, 31, and 36-41 have been previously canceled), and claims 14, 23, 30, 33 to 35, 42, 46, and 59 are amended. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments present the claims in better form for allowance. Applicants further submit that the amendments do not add new material, and support for the amendments may be found in the specification and drawings as originally filed. Further, claims 14, 23, 24, 30, 32 to 35, 42, 46, and 51-59 are amended or canceled without disclaimer and without prejudice. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the inventions of the originally filed claims later during the prosecution of this application or during a subsequently filed application. Reconsideration of the outstanding rejections is respectfully requested based on the following remarks. Applicants submit that the current amendment presents the claims in better form for allowance or consideration on appeal.

Claim Objection to Claim 32

Claim 32 was objected to as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Claim 32 has been canceled, and therefore, Applicants submit that the claim objection is now moot. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the claim objection of claim 32.

Anticipation/Obviousness Rejection

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) of claims 14, 23, 30, 32-35 and 59 as being anticipated by, or in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,162,543 ("Dubots"). Although Applicants disagree that the invention of claim 14, prior to this amendment, was anticipated or obviousness in view of Dubots, Applicants are amending claim 14 to include the limitations of claim 24. Applicants reserve the right to pursue any and all inventions previously presented in the Present Application

at a later time, for example in a divisional or continuation application, at least for the reasons presented in a prior reply.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for pointing out allowable subject matter in claim 24, as this significantly reduces the time needed to prosecute the Present Application. Claim 14 is amended to include the limitations of claim 24, claim 24 is canceled. Claims 30 and 33 to 35 are amended to change the preamble from an article to a wafer boat. Claims 42 and 46 are amended to clarify some elements within those claims. Claim 59 has been amended to be a dependent claim from claim 14. Claims 51 to 58 have been canceled as corresponding to a non-elected invention. Applicants respectfully request the U.S.P.T.O. to rejoin claims 42 to 50 (withdrawal of the restriction requirement with respect to claims 42 to 50), as all of such claims depend directly or indirectly from allowable claim 14. *See* M.P.E.P. § 821.04. The amendments to the claims in this reply are being done for a commercial reason of giving the assignee the ability to enforce its rights more quickly and potentially keep assignee's competitors from using the claimed invention, rather than solely a legal reason of complying with the requirements under Title 35 of the United States Code.

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is requested to issue a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action by the Applicants would be desirable for placing this application in even better condition for issue, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 50-3797.

Respectfully submitted,

10/08/2008
Date

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